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Centre and Progressives by Pan-Germanism, are set forth in a tone of caustic sprightliness which ever borders on caricature.

Beyond these side-lights, it can hardly be said that the author adds to our knowledge of persons and events, though here and there we are helped to complete the picture of the political development of the period. New to the reviewer is the account of Bethmann-Hollweg's attempt early in 1914 to get the Bishop of Strassburg to discipline the clerical delegates of Alsace, as well as the evidence of Lieber's hostility to the Alsatian delegates (p. 61), and the influence of Legien, the head of the Socialist trade-unions, in driving the leaders of Socialism toward Possibilism (p. 183). Most important, perhaps, is the detailed account of Wetterlé's intervention in the first Morocco crisis as intermediary between the German Foreign Office and a mysterious representative of the French ministry (p. 236 ff.).

ROBERT H. FIFE, JR.

The Eclipse of Russia. By E. J. DILLON. (New York: George H. Doran Company. 1918. Pp. vii, 423. \$4.00.)

Few foreigners have had better opportunities to become acquainted with the complex political forces in Russia than Dr. Dillon. A graduate of two Russian universities, and a professor of comparative philology at the Ukrainian University of Kharkov, he has also served as an editor on two Russian newspapers and has long been noted for his contributions to the *Contemporary Review* and other periodicals outside Russia. More than that, he was for twenty years the intimate friend of Count Witte; he lived in Witte's house, accompanied him on his journeys, handled the great finance minister's private papers, and was the recipient of his after-dinner meditations and reminiscences. Quite naturally, therefore, Boswell dedicates his volume "To the memory of my friend and Russia's unique statesman, S. I. Witte". If one were to sum up Dr. Dillon's conclusions in a sentence, one would say that the eclipse of Russia is due to the fact that Witte was not allowed, owing to the weakness of Nicholas II. and the rottenness of the court around him, to carry out the peaceful reforms and development which might have retarded, if it did not avert, the collapse of the Tsarist state.

The first half of the volume will prove less interesting to historians than the later chapters. It is made up of a rather rambling, anecdotal, and philosophical analysis of the causes of the Russian *delirium tremens*. As the author departed from Russia in March, 1914, and unfortunately left behind many of his notes where they are inaccessible, he has to rely on his memory, on his general knowledge of pre-war conditions, and on his own previous articles—which he frequently quotes—when they show how prescient were his prophecies. Among the causes of Russia's downfall he emphasizes four. The first is the "predatory character of the Tsardom", the steady conquest of alien peoples which has given

rise to the centrifugal nationalistic movements which autocracy found it increasingly difficult to suppress. The second cause was the vicious system of parasitical bureaucracy which kept the peasants degraded, ignorant, and without sufficient land. The third was the total failure of the *intelligentsia*, both in 1905 and in 1917, to understand the Russian peasant and his one great desire for land. From the *intelligentsia* came both the apostles of revolution and the bourgeois liberals, such as the Kadets. But they were both mere theorists. They had no roots among the people and did not know how to use the opportunity when it came. And the fourth and greatest cause was the autocratic system which lodged supreme power in such a shallow, weak-willed, secretive, deluded, self-complacent nonentity as Nicholas II. Nowhere have we seen such a black portrait of the late Tsar as Dr. Dillon paints, and he has plenty of stories to justify it. By way of illustrating the moral and political rottenness of the group around the Tsar, he gives vivid and excellently informed chapters on Rasputin, Father Gapon, and Azev, and all their double-edged treachery. He even asserts that several attempts to murder Witte were made by intriguers close to the throne, with the Tsar's sanction.

In the second half of the volume Dr. Dillon touches upon international questions of the past twenty-five years. By reporting things which Witte related to him he throws new light on a number of shady transactions—if Witte's recollections are to be trusted. The duplicity by which the shrewd and vigorous Kaiser forced the weak Tsar into signing the Björkö treaty is shown to have its counterpart in two other similar cases of secret royal diplomacy. In his first visit to Russia, soon after the accession of Nicholas II., the Kaiser extorted from the Tsar the agreement that the Germans should seize Kiao Chau; and in the Potsdam meeting of 1910, the Tsar was wheedled, in similar fashion, behind the back of his ministers, into giving a written approval of the German military mission to Turkey under General Liman von Sanders. Not less interesting are the shrewd moves by which Witte secured advantages in the commercial relations between Germany and Russia; by which he countered the Kaiser's suggestion of a tariff war against the United States by proposals of his own for a peaceful federation of Europe; and by which he on several occasions used his influence to avert wars which he foresaw must be disastrous for Russia. Less convincing is Dr. Dillon's account of the plot by which the Tsar planned to seize the heights of the Upper Bosphorus in 1896, and his statement that the first Hague Peace Conference was essentially a hypocritical trick on the Tsar's part designed to spare Russia from an increased expenditure on guns demanded by Kuropatkin. These and other interesting revelations of Witte, being mostly in the nature of reminiscences, need verification from other sources before being accepted as unquestioned historical material.

SIDNEY B. FAY.